

Message Text

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ACTION L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 459

INFO USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 823

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PORG, UNGA, RP, FI

SUBJECT: COMPETITION BETWEEN FINLAND AND THE PHILIPPINES FOR CHAIRMANSHIP OF SIXTH COMMITTEE AT 31ST UNGA

REFS: (A) USUN 3815; (B) MANILA 10455; (C) MANILA 4438

1. REF A IS THE FIRST INDICATION WE HAVE RECEIVED THAT THE U.S. DOES NOT PLAN TO SUPPORT PHILIPPINE CANDIDATE (SOLICITOR GENERAL MENDOZA) FOR CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE SIXTH (LEGAL) COMMITTEE. DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT GOP ORIGINALLY ASKED OUR SUPPORT FOR MENDOZA CANDIDACY AS MEMBER OF INTERNATIONAL LAW COMMISSION (REF C). SUBSEQUENTLY, DFA INFORMED US GOP HAD WITHDRAWN MENDOZA CANDIDACY FOR ILC AND WAS PROPOSING HIM INSTEAD FOR CHAIRMANSHIP OF SIXTH COMMITTEE (REF B).

2. ALTHOUGH GOP HAS NOT FORMALLY ASKED FOR U.S. SUPPORT OF MENDOZA FOR SIXTH COMMITTEE CHAIRMANSHIP, WE URGE THAT DEPARTMENT GIVE EVERY CONSIDERATION TO SUPPRTING HIS CANDIDACY, EVEN THOUGH SUCH WOULD BE A DEPARTURE
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FROM TRADITIONAL PRACTICE OF SUPPRTING CANDIDATES

AGREED UPON BY REGIONAL GROUPINGS. AS DEPARTMENT WELL AWARE, MENDOZA HAS FINE QUALIFICATIONS FOR THIS POSITION. CONTRARY TO USUN STATEMENT (REF A), HE HAS SUBSTANTIAL UN-RELATED EXPERIENCE, INCLUDING SENIRO MEMBERSHIP IN GOP DELEGATIONS TO VARIOUS LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCES IN PAST SEVERAL YEARS AND GOP DELEGATE TO THE 1968-69 VIENNA CONFERENCE OF LAW OF TREATIES. LAST YEAR HE SERVED AS SPECIAL ADVISOR TO THE PHILIPPINE UNGA DELEGATION. BEYOND THIS, MONDOZA HAS BEEN ONE OF THE MOST CONSTRUCTIVE MEMBERS OF THE PHILIPPINE PANEL ON THE CURRENT BASE NEGOTIATIONS. HE IS ALSO A PRIME AND MOST USEFUL EMBASSY CONTACT ON VARIOUS LEGAL ISSUES HERE INCLUDING THOSE IN THE HUMRAN RIGHTS AREA. IF, AS ANTICIPATED, THE INCUMBENT JUSTICE SECRETARY MOVES TO THE SUPREME COURT IN THE NEAR FUTURE, MENDOZA IS AN EXCELLENT BET TO TAKE OVER THAT KEY POSITION.

3. REQUEST THAT DEPARTMENT ADVISE US OF U.S. POSITION ON SIXTH COMMITTEE CHAIRMANSHIP.

IT IS NOT REPEAT NOT CLEAR TO US WHETHER MENDOZA HAS SUPPORT OF ASEAN AND OTHER EAST ASIAN GROUPS. IF SO, IT IS NOT CLEAR HOW WE DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THAT SUPPORT AND WEST EUROPE SUPPORT WHICH FINNISH CANDIDATE ENJOYS.

4. IF FINAL DECISION IS MADE TO SUPPORT FINNISH CANDIDATE, WE WOULD HOPE USUN, TOGETHER WITH OTHER FRIENDLY DELEGATIONS WHICH FACT SAME DILEMMA, WILL CONSULT WITH ROMULO AND MENDOZA PERSONALLY TO EXPLAIN SITUATION AND SEEK TO MINIMIZE EMBARRASSMENT. IT IS OBVIOUSLY IMPORTANT THAT THIS BE DONE IN AS TIMELY A FASHION AS CIRUMCSTANCES PROVE POSSIBLE. BOTH ROMULO AND MENDOZA ARE CURRENTLY IN NEW YORK. SULLIVAN

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